

Consumer Representation Plans

Seventeen Federal departments & agencies published their final Consumer Representation Plans on Sept. 28. These programs were developed at the request of President Ford to increase consumer participation in the decision-making process. Single copies of the *Federal Register* containing all 17 final consumer representation programs may be obtained for 75¢ from Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. (Be sure to ask for Part 2 of the Sept. 28, 1976, issue.) Single copies of the various Consumer Representation Plans are available without charge from the consumer advisor of the particular department or agency involved. For example, consumers may simply address their requests to "Consumer Advisor, Interior Dept., Washington, DC." Final programs were also published by departments of Agriculture; Commerce; Defense; Health, Education & Welfare; Housing & Urban Development; Justice; Labor; State; Transportation; & Treasury; & the following agencies: Energy Research & Development Administration; Environmental Protection Agency; Federal Energy Administration; General Services Administration; Small Business Administration; & Veterans Administration. Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 28, page 42763; Nov. 26, 1975, page 50092. CONSUMER NEWS: Dec. 1, 1975.

Register result

The following action has been taken by a Federal agency. It was previously summarized in CONSUMER REGISTER as a proposal.

- **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)** has adopted mandatory emergency captions to be used on television screens to tell consumers with impaired hearing about storms, floods & other disasters. FCC received several thousand comments from individuals as well as comments from many state & local organizations & Congressmen. Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 17, page 40108; Dec. 22, 1975, page 60080. CONSUMER REGISTER: Feb. 15.

Baby food

Nov. 8 is deadline for comments on **Food & Drug Administration's (FDA)** proposals to require more ingredient information on infant & junior food labels. (Milk-type formulas are not covered by these proposals because those products must already carry detailed ingredient information.)

Proposal would require that the percentage of the main ingredients in both infant (up to one year) & junior (one to 4 years) food be stated as part of the name of the food—such as "Carrots & Peas—contains 60% carrots & 20% peas."

Another proposal—for infant foods only—would require that the list of ingredients state the percentage of each major (5% or more of the product) ingredient in the product—such as carrots (60%), peas (20%), water (15%), sucrose, salt. Present regulations require the listing—but not the percentage—of ingredients in descending order of predominance.

FDA is particularly interested in finding out:

- How much consumers are willing to pay for this type of labeling in terms of increased food costs.
- What additional benefits are made possible by a requirement like this that are not now available.
- If consumers might be misled by the percentage declaration of all major ingredients. For example, would it be misleading to have sugar that is added to the product declared when sugar that occurs naturally in other ingredients does not have to be listed?

Proposal is the result of a petition from Center for Science in the Public Interest, a nonprofit research organization.

Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 7, page 37593. Send comments to Hearing Clerk, Food & Drug Administration, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20852.

Household movers

Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) is investigating the possibility of dropping its present requirement that household moving companies provide shipping cost estimates to consumers who ask for them. ICC is also considering a change in its rules on estimating practices.

ICC has received many complaints from consumers on the estimating process & has decided that present regulations have not worked satisfactorily "to reduce the alarming number of inaccurate estimates being made."

Dec. 1 is deadline for comments on these matters. ICC would like special attention focused on such questions as:

- Should the practice of estimating be abolished & replaced by a requirement that the mover state only the applicable charges & then give the consumer the necessary information & formula to make his own estimate?
- If the estimating requirement is dropped, how would consumers know about probable cost of moving?
- Should movers who make inaccurate estimates be penalized?
- Should individual estimators be required to register with ICC? Should methods of training & compensation for estimators be regulated?
- Should potential customers be given a written warning telling them that estimates are not binding & that movers are required to collect all charges incurred even if the charges were not estimated?
- What should be done about consumers who do not show the movers all the goods that will be shipped? (Movers complain that consumers are not always forthright in this area.)

Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 3, page 37350. Send comments to Office of Proceedings, Interstate Commerce Commission, Washington, DC 20423.

Fuel economy for cars

Dec. 31 is deadline for comments on a draft report by the **Federal Task Force on Motor Vehicle Goals Beyond 1980**. Report, which is being made available through **Transportation Dept.**, indicates that it is possible to achieve a 50% reduction in gasoline usage if consumers are willing to buy lighter-weight, more efficient cars. Cars use 31% of US petroleum supplies, the largest single consumer of petroleum.

Because other factors besides fuel economy must be considered—such as air quality, highway fatalities & accidents & the automobile industry itself—the Task Force raises the following issues of concern:

- How can consumers be convinced that they must buy different types of cars to achieve a desirable fuel economy? Mandated goal of 11.7 kilometers per liter (27.5 miles per gallon) by 1985 can only be realized with consumer understanding & cooperation.
- How long will it take the auto industry to change to more fuel-efficient cars without too much strain on the industry, its suppliers or on levels of employment?

▪ How should the nation handle the risks the auto industry must take because of a change to more fuel-efficient cars? What about the changeover risks for small companies?

▪ What can the Federal Government do about the sometimes conflicting objectives of reduced energy, increased safety & improved environmental quality? Several agencies have jurisdiction over various aspects of car production.

• What should be done about passenger safety & emissions control in car designs?

• What can the Federal Government do to hasten the change to fuel-efficient cars?

Informal briefings have already taken place in the Detroit, Houston & Los Angeles areas. There will be a public hearing on the report as follows:

Oct. 21: 10 a.m.

Room 2230, Transportation Dept.

400 7th St. SW

Washington, DC 20590

Representatives of auto manufacturers, public interest groups & others are expected to testify.

Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 13, page 38811. Send comments to Docket Clerk, Office of the General Counsel, TGC, Transportation Dept., Washington, DC 20590. Identify comments by file number: OST File No. 40. For a copy of the report, contact: Paul Long, Chief Facilities Management Branch, TAD-443, Transportation Dept., Washington, DC 20590; phone: 202-426-4723.

Injectable drugs (continued)

Oct. 29 is new deadline for comments on **Food & Drug Administration's** (FDA) proposals on stricter regulations on making large & small volume parenteral—injectable—drug products for human use. Parenteral Drug Association asked for more time to comment.

Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 10, page 38515; June 1, pages 22202 & 22219. CONSUMER REGISTER: July 15. Send comments to Hearing Clerk, Food & Drug Administration, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20852.

Hearings

USED CARS—Federal Trade Commission (FTC) announced following dates & places for public hearings on its proposal to require used car dealers to disclose certain information about the cars they are trying to sell. All hearings start at 9:30 a.m.

Dec. 6

Room 307, Kennedy Federal Bldg.

Boston, MA 02114

(To speak, write or call by Nov. 15: Arthur Levine, 1301 Analax Bldg., 150 Causeway, Boston, MA 02114; phone: 617-223-6221.)

Jan 10, 1977

31st Floor, Celebreze Federal Bldg.

1240 East 9th St.

Cleveland, OH 44199

(To speak, write or call: Sharon Devine at above address by Dec. 20; phone: 216-293-4207.)

Feb. 7, 1977

Suite 2665, Federal Trade Commission Bldg.

2001 Bryan St.

Dallas, TX 75201

(To speak, write or call: Andrew Armstrong at above address by Jan 17, 1977; phone: 214-749-3056.)

March, 1977

Room 13112, Federal Bldg.

11000 Wilshire Blvd.

Los Angeles, CA 90024

(To speak, write or call: Jesus Martinez at above address by Feb. 14, 1977; phone: 213-799-7575.)

March 28, 1977

Room 12138, Federal Bldg.

450 Golden Gate Ave.

San Francisco, CA 94102

(To speak, write or call: George K. Choi at above address by

March 7, 1977; phone: 415-556-1270.)

April 25, 1977

Room 332 Federal Trade Commission Bldg.

6th & Pennsylvania Ave. NW

Washington, DC 20680

(To speak, write or call: Matthew Daynard at above address by April 4, 1977; phone: 202-523-3400.)

FTC has published its final notice of proposed rulemaking on used cars & will accept comments until Oct. 22.

Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 15, page 39337; Jan. 6, page 1089. CONSUMER REGISTER: Feb. 1. Send comments to James P. Greenan, Federal Trade Commission, Washington, DC 20580.

Energy efficiency labeling

Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has postponed its proposed energy efficiency labeling rules that are required under the Energy Policy & Conservation Act until necessary consumer research for developing prototype labels is completed.

When suitable labeling finally appears on appliances (such as refrigerators, freezers, dishwashers, clothes dryers, television sets & water heaters), consumers will have certain energy information they need in making an informed judgment on the purchase of appliances.

Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 7, page 37677; July 27, page 31237. CONSUMER REGISTER: June 1. CONSUMER NEWS: April 1.

Imported wine

Oct. 29 is deadline for comments on **Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms'** (BATF) proposal to require imported wines to meet the same standards required for domestic wine.

Present regulations require the issuance of a certificate of origin & identity from an authorized official of a foreign government, but only if that government permits such issuance. Proposed rules would require that before the wine is released from US Customs, a full & accurate description, certificate of origin, identity & analysis would have to be submitted—even if it was not authorized by the foreign government.

BATF says new regulations are necessary to protect consumers from harmful ingredients (such as wormwood & methyl alcohol); flavors & colors that are not permitted in domestic wine; ingredients that have not been approved for food production in this country; & incorrect labeling of weight & alcohol content. Some controls already exist—BATF samples imported products & prohibits their entry into this country if they are found to be unsafe or mislabeled.

Details—*Federal Register*: Aug. 30, page 36498. Send comments to Director, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms, Washington DC 20226; Attn: Chief, Regulations & Procedures.

This listing, prepared by Marion Q. Ciacchio, is intended only as summary coverage of selected *Federal Register* items deemed of particular interest to consumers, & it does not affect the legal status or effect of any document required or authorized to be published pursuant to Section 5 of Federal Register Act as amended, 44 U.S.C. 1505. *Federal Register* is published Monday through Friday (except Federal Government holidays) by **Office of the Federal Register, National Archives & Records Service, General Services Administration**. Subscription is \$5 a month or \$50 a year & may be ordered from **Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office**, Washington, DC 20402. Superintendent also sells copies of *Federal Register* for 75¢ each. Free copies of *Federal Register* may be available in libraries.

For you

These forms are for you to use, if you wish, in commenting on any Federal Agency proposal summarized in CONSUMER REGISTER. Of course, if you cannot get your comments on the front & back of a form, feel free to continue your comments on additional paper.

Send comment forms to addresses listed in the summaries.

CONSUMER NEWS is publishing these forms in cooperation with **Food & Drug Administration (FDA)**.

Rate Register

Freight

• **Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC)** has approved a request by the nation's railroads to increase freight rates by up to 4%, beginning Oct. 7. Peanuts are excluded from the increases. ICC had earlier exempted products such as clay, cigarettes, blankets, furniture, tires & aluminum that are shipped from the South to the West [RATE REGISTER: Sept. 1].

Planes

• Beginning Oct. 7, **Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB)** will permit air travelers to qualify for discount fares if they sign up for a charter flight 30 to 45 days before departure. According to the new plan—called Advanced Booking Charters (ABCs)—travelers will not have to belong to a club or other group to be eligible. Flights between the US & 9 European countries will require 45 days advanced booking with a minimum stay of 7 days, but flights elsewhere only require 30 days advanced booking with no minimum stay. ABCs are good for round trip travel only.

There is no tour purchase requirement, but the ABCs may be sold as part of a tour package. Purpose of the new plan is to increase the availability of low-cost charter air travel.

• Oct. 29 is deadline for comments on **Civil Aeronautics Board's (CAB)** proposal to require all tour operators & organizers to tell charter passengers that all direct airlines have to verify the identity of every charter passenger before he gets on the plane. CAB says this notice should help eliminate unnecessary inconvenience or delay when passengers fail to pro-

(Continued next page)

Clip this form, fill in blanks, write your comments & mail to agency noted in CONSUMER REGISTER item.

This is my opinion on (title of item in CONSUMER REGISTER) _____

by (name of agency) _____

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Name _____ Date _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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Rate Register

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duce adequate identification (such as passports) upon boarding. Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 3, page 37342. Send comments to Docket Section, Civil Aeronautics Board, Washington, DC 20428. Identify as Docket 29285.

• Beginning today, National Airlines is offering free movies & popcorn to nonstop travelers flying between New York & Miami on wide bodied DC10 planes. On Nov. 1, National will expand the service to include all National DC10 flights that are at least one hour & 58 minutes long.

• Oct. 11 is deadline for comments on Civil Aeronautics Board's (CAB) proposal to require all airlines that overbook their flights to tell travelers they do so & also to tell them they may be compensated if they are bumped.

CAB has already asked airlines for information on their overbooking policies to determine, among other things, whether overbooking is a deceptive & unfair practice. If the new proposed rule is adopted, it would be in effect only until these broader issues are resolved. [CONSUMER REGISTER: May 1 for a more detailed explanation of these "broader issues."]

Proposal to require airlines to tell the public about their overbooking practices would apply only to those airlines that have filed notices with CAB, "giving constructive notice of overbooking." CAB has not decided what to do about an airline that deliberately overbooks without filing tariffs.

Under the proposal, overbooking policy notices would have to be given by using a conspicuously displayed sign at ticket counters & by a separate notice delivered with the ticket. These notices would be similar to the ones presently required that tell passengers about monetary limits on a carrier's liability. Proposal does not require reservation agents to give overbooking information over the telephone. Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 20, page 40500. Send comments to Docket Section, Civil Aeronautics Board, Washington, DC 20428. Identify as Docket 29776.

Phones

• **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)** has ordered American Telephone & Telegraph Co. (AT&T) to file revised rates for some of its services, including long distance Message Telecommunications Service (MTS), Wide Area Telecommunications Service (WATS) & private line service. FCC said AT&T's cost pricing method could result in having public telephone consumers subsidize private line customers. Within 8 months, AT&T's rate filings will have to be justified on a fully distributed cost basis.

